



**CITY OF SUNNYVALE
REPORT
Planning Commission**

April 12, 2004

SUBJECT: **2004-0245 – Pete Edwards** [Applicant] - Application on a 9,420 square-foot vacant lot located at **1397 Cordilleras Avenue** in an R-1 (Low Density Residential) Zoning District. (APN: 323-07-054);

Motion Design Review to allow the construction of a new 4,100 square-foot two-story house where up to 4,050 square feet can be considered without Planning Commission review.

REPORT IN BRIEF

Existing Site Conditions The site is vacant. A one-story single-family residence was demolished sometime in February without a permit.

Surrounding Land Uses

North	Single Family Residential R-1
South	Single Family Residential R-1
East	Single Family Residential R-1
West	Single Family Residential R-1

Issues Neighborhood compatibility of size and design

Environmental Status A Class 1 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from California Environmental Quality Act provisions and City Guidelines.

Staff Recommendation Denial

**PROJECT SITE MAP HAS TECHNICAL
DIFFICULTY FOR WEBSITE POSTING.**

PROJECT DATA TABLE

	<u>EXISTING</u> <u>(prior to demo)</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u>	<u>REQUIRED/</u> <u>PERMITTED</u>
General Plan	RLO	RLO	RLO
Zoning District	R-1	R-1	R-1
Lot Size (s.f.)	9,420 s.f.	9,420 s.f.	8,000s.f. min.
Gross Floor Area (s.f.)	1,471 s.f.	4,040 s.f.	4,050 s.f. (without public hearing) max.
Lot Coverage (%)	15.5%	26%	40%
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	15.5%	43.5%	45% max. (without P.C. review)
No. of Units	1	1	1 & 1 accessory living unit
No. of Buildings On-Site	1 (plus shed)	1	---
Building Height (ft.)	15 ft. approx.	30 ft.	30 ft. max.
No. of Stories	1	2	2 max.
Setbacks (facing prop.)	1 st /2 nd story		1 st /2 nd story
• Front	Unknown, but consistent with neighborhood	25 ft./25 ft.	20/25 ft. min.
• Left Side	Unknown, but consistent with neighborhood	9 ft./9 ft.	9 ft./9 ft. min.
• Right Side	Unknown, but consistent with neighborhood	6 ft./12 ft.	6 ft./9 ft. (21 total for 2 nd floor) min.
• Rear	Unknown, but consistent with neighborhood	52 ft./52 ft.	20 ft./20 ft. min.
Parking			
• Total No. of Spaces	4	4	4 min.

ANALYSIS

Background

Staff has been working with the applicant since January of this year to prepare a plan that conformed to the City Zoning Code and was consistent with the Single Family Home Design Techniques. Staff expressed concerns with the compatibility of the design and size of the proposed residence early in the review process. The applicant was unwilling to make significant changes to the plans beyond conformance to the Zoning Code and staff determined that the plans could not be approved as submitted. Refer to Attachment 4 for further history of the project.

Previous Actions on the Site: The following table summarizes previous planning applications related to the subject site.

File Number	Brief Description	Decision	Date
2004-0013	Miscellaneous Plan Application for Design Review of a two-story residence.	Denied based on incompatibility with the neighborhood.	4/18/04

Description of Proposed Project

The plans reflect a new two-story residence of 4,040 square feet on a vacant lot where a 1,471 square foot residence was recently demolished. This application is under Planning Commission review because the property owner filed an application for a 4,100 square foot residence where 4,050 is the maximum that can be reviewed by Staff.

Surrounding Neighborhood Architectural Style and Character:

The neighborhood style is predominantly single-story wood-sided homes built in the 1950's and Ranch style homes built in the 1960's and 1970's. Many homes have been remodeled in the neighborhood with most being single-story additions using stucco or wood-siding and contemporary architectural styles. There have also been a few two-story additions and new two-story homes built. Some have the bulk of the second floor space placed directly over the garage while most of the others have second floors spanning the length of the first floor but set back along the front elevation and articulated with wall projections and breaks in the roofline. An example of this design can be seen at 1397 La

Bella just one block from this proposed residence. The house at La Bella is approximately 3,551 square feet with a Floor Area Ratio of 36 percent.

Environmental Review

A Class 1 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from California Environmental Quality Act provisions, as amended, in accordance with Resolution #193-86.

Design Review

Use:

The site is currently a vacant lot and is proposed for a new 4,100 square foot two-story residence. The home would have 5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, and approximately 1,000 square feet of common living area. The family room at the rear of the house has a high ceiling that occupies equal volume on the first and second floors. The open space above the family room is not counted as floor area.

Site Layout:

The site dimensions of this corner lot are about 75 feet wide by about 126 feet deep and total 9,420 square feet. These are typical lot dimensions in this neighborhood. The proposed residence conforms to all setback and lot coverage standards for the R-1 zoning district.

Architecture:

Prior to demolition the site contained a one-story house with a low-pitched roof, wood siding and garage oriented toward the Cordilleras street frontage. It was very similar in appearance to the other homes in the neighborhood built about the same time and with similar materials and setbacks.

The proposed design is reminiscent of a Colonial style house with the exception of a two-car garage in the front. The first and second floor are virtually identical in size with no breaks in the walls on the front and left side elevations. The rear and right side elevations have only minor breaks in the walls, providing minimal rooflines along those elevations. Both the first and second floors have many large windows along all elevations.

The style of the residence and lack of articulation give the house a boxy appearance and a sense of grandeur that is uncommon for this Sunnyvale neighborhood. The square footage of the proposed residence is also very large for the neighborhood, even when compared to newer and recently remodeled homes nearby. Most of the recently remodeled and newer homes in the neighborhood have floor areas in the range of 2,500 to 3,500 square feet. The

second floor is proposed to be setback to the minimum Zoning Code requirements only.

Privacy:

The proposed design incorporates many large windows on both floors and on all elevations. Several large bedroom windows will have a direct view into the yards and living spaces of some of the surrounding neighbors. However, staff has not received any letters of concern with the project.

Compatibility with the Surrounding Neighborhood:

The following table represents home sizes for some of the newer, remodeled or two-story homes in the neighborhood.

Location	Gross Floor Area (square feet)	Floor Area Ratio (%)	Approximate Year Built
1307 Selo	2,394	38	1980
1322 Selo	3,107	49	2000
1339 Selo	3,329	52	1996
1363 Selo	2,372	37	1995
1386 Selo	2,875	45	2004
1366 Los Arboles	4,373	45	1998
1398 Los Arboles	2,475	28	1974
1331 La Bella	2,551	23	1987
1396 La Bella	2,100	21	1988
1397 La Bella	3,551	36	2003
1312 Cordilleras	3,296	34	1995
1361 Cordilleras	3,070	32	1987
1338 Ponte Clair	2,616	33	1962
1346 Ponte Clair	2,168	27	1962
Subject application	4,100	44%	n/a

Parking/Circulation:

The proposed project meets parking requirements with two covered and two uncovered parking spaces.

Compliance with Development Standards

The proposed project meets all development standards for homes in the R-1 Zoning District. Sunnyvale Municipal Code 19.80.040, Design Review Decisions, allows for an appeal of a staff denial to the Planning Commission.

Expected Impact on the Surroundings

The proposed project could have some impacts on the surroundings. These would be limited to privacy impacts for immediate adjacent neighbors, and the potential to set a design precedent for future development in the area.

Findings, General Plan Goals and Conditions of Approval

Staff has not been able to make the required Findings that the design and bulk of the proposed project are compatible with the neighborhood. The proposed project is large for the neighborhood and the design, with a lack of articulation between the first and second floor, represents an architectural style uncommon among the mostly Ranch style homes.

Staff is recommending denial of this project because the Findings (Attachment 1) were not made. However, if the Planning Commission is able to make the required findings, staff is recommending the following Conditions of Approval (Attachment 2).

- Findings and General Plan Goals are located in Attachment 1.
- Conditions of Approval are located in Attachment 2.

Fiscal Impact

No fiscal impacts other than normal fees and taxes are expected.

Public Contact

Notice of Public Hearing	Staff Report	Agenda
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Published in the <i>Sun</i> newspaper• Posted on the site• Mailed to the adjacent property owners of the project site	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Posted on the City of Sunnyvale's Website• Provided at the Reference Section of the City of Sunnyvale's Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Posted on the City's official notice bulletin board• City of Sunnyvale's Website• Recorded for SunDial

Alternatives

1. Deny the Design Review.
2. Approve the Design Review with the attached conditions.
3. Approve the Design Review with modified conditions.

Recommendation

Recommend Alternative 1 to the Planning Commission.

Prepared by:

Heather Bradley
Project Planner

Reviewed by:

Gerri Caruso
Principal Planner

Reviewed by:

Trudi Ryan
Planning Officer

Attachments:

1. Findings
2. Conditions of Approval
3. Site and Architectural Plans
4. Project History with letters to Applicant
5. Letters from rear neighbor dated February 11, 2004
and February 27, 2004
6. Map 2-story Home Distribution

To view attachments 3 through 6, please go back to Planning Commission Reports:

<http://sunnyvale.ca.gov/City+Council/Boards+and+Commissions/Planning/Reports/>

Recommended Findings – Design Review

The proposed project as designed does not meet the requirements of the Single Family Home Design Techniques in terms of compatibility of size, scale, bulk, mass and articulation with homes in the surrounding neighborhood. The large size of the second story and lack of substantial wall or roof breaks along the primarily visible front, rear and left side elevations put the proposed residence out of character with the architectural style of homes in the neighborhood.

Single Family Home Design Techniques - Design Principles

Design Principle	Comments
<i>2.2.1 Reinforce prevailing neighborhood home orientation and entry patterns</i>	<p>The proposed residence is oriented toward the street in the same manner as other homes in the neighborhood</p> <p>The proposed structure at 30 feet in height and built out to the maximum building envelope is not consistent with the majority of homes in this neighborhood. The proposed structure lacks an articulation front entry like other homes in the neighborhood. The neighborhood is predominantly a single-story one.</p> <p>The predominant pattern for two-story homes in the neighborhood is for second floors to be smaller and setback from the first.</p>

Design Principle	Comments
<i>2.2.2 Respect the scale, bulk, and character of homes in the adjacent neighborhood.</i>	<p>While the Colonial architectural style of the residence is fine in and of itself, the size and height of this proposal gives the structure a boxy appearance that is out of character with the neighborhood.</p> <p>The proposed structure lacks both vertical and horizontal articulations and therefore does not lend itself to having distinct components.</p> <p>Because the second floor footprint is virtually the same as the first there is no change in wall planes or roofline breaks. The design also lacks decorative features.</p> <p>The second floor of the proposed structure is larger than most in the neighborhood. The second floor is not integrated into the roof form and is not setback from the walls of the first floor except for a small break along the rear elevation and a six foot break along the right elevation to meet minimum second floor setback requirements.</p> <p>The walls of the proposed structure are generally long and unbroken and there are virtually no first floor roof forms to mitigate the height of the second floor walls.</p>

Design Principle	Comments
<i>2.2.3 Design homes to respect their immediate neighbors</i>	<p>The proposed design incorporates many large windows on both floors and on all elevations. Several large bedroom windows will have direct views into the yards and living spaces of some of the surrounding neighbors.</p> <p>The windows of the proposed structure are large and numerous and will have an impact on the right side neighbor. Other neighbors may be far enough away so as not to be affected because fences will block the line of sight.</p>
<i>2.2.4 Minimize the visual impacts of parking</i>	<p>The garage is a prominent feature of the design. Techniques such as not locating the garage forward of the living areas of the house and dividing the two-car garage opening into two separated one-car openings have not been utilized.</p>
<i>2.2.5 Respect the predominant materials and character of front yard landscaping</i>	<p>The applicant has not provided a landscape plan, typical landscape materials would be lawn, shrubs and annual and perennial flowering plants</p>
<i>2.2.6 Use high quality materials and craftsmanship</i>	<p>The applicant has not provided material details, but they would typically be stucco with a composition or flat tile roof.</p>
<i>2.2.7 Preserve mature landscaping</i>	<p>No mature trees exist on site.</p>

Conditions of Approval

In additions to complying with all applicable City, County, State and Federal Statutes, Codes, Ordinances, and Resolutions, the Permittee expressly accepts and agrees to comply with the following Conditions of Approval.

1. The one-year expiration date of the Design review shall be measured from the date of the approval by the final review authority at a public hearing if the approval is not exercised.
2. The Conditions of Approval shall be reproduced on one page of the plans submitted for a building permit for this project.
3. This project must be in substantial conformance with the approved plans. Any major site and architectural plan modifications shall be treated as an amendment of the original approval and shall be subject to approval at a public hearing except that minor changes of the approved plans may be approved at the staff level by the Director of Community Development.
4. Obtain building permits.

